

NELSON PROPERTY INVESTORS ASSOCIATION
APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER
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Our first meeting of the year at the Honest Lawyer Point Road, Monaco is on Tuesday 11th April 7:30 pm. Yes, we still have the before meeting optional meal at 6 pm.

Note: No bookings are required and no charge for attending. Non-members are welcome, but we do encourage all attendees to subscribe to our free newsletters.

I am really excited to announce first-term Mayor of Nelson, Hon Dr Nick Smith is speaking. Nick is well known in the Nelson-Tasman region after more than three decades as an MP, firstly in the former Tasman electorate and then as the MP for Nelson. During his Parliamentary career, Dr Smith was a Minister of 13 different portfolios. He has a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours and a PhD in Civil Engineering. Following Dr Smith's retirement from Parliament in 2021, he was Smith Crane's project manager for the construction of New Zealand's largest wind farm at Turitea. Dr Smith is a Member of the New Zealand Institute of Directors and a Fellow of Engineering New Zealand. He is also a trustee on several boards of community organisations such as the Cawthron Institute.

SPEAKERS AT MEETINGS

In my last newsletter I announced Pete Halligan would be organising speakers in order to relieve Glenn. Well Pete did arrange one great speaker then regretfully immediately resigned from that position. Stewart Henry has taken over this difficult duty for now. Thankyou everyone for putting up with the inevitable bumps when changes occur. It is both encouraging to hear from so many of you that have enquired about our next meeting and even more so very frustrating knowing that I need to step back from this position. Matching speakers, venue availability, and wanting to fill our knowledge gaps as the storms of the market rage around us is a tricky juggling act. If you need your property managed well there is no point going to someone with plenty of time on their hands.

IS SOMEONE WATCHING YOU ?

A well know local journalist recently suggested I was a conspiracy theorist. Those of you who have put up with my off the cuff comments over the decades may well agree with her. Being one of the silent majority is not something I aspire to even if it does mean one has to hang on tightly when sailing in bad weather. Who needs a sense of peaceful calm when on a fast pair of snow skies. So, when showing prospective tenants through a rental last year my antennas twirled when two unlikely well dressed prospective ladies turned up to view a cheap flat (cheapest advertised on Trademe). One said she worked for a local government agency and the other was silent but was listening intently. The talker asked some strange questions like what decorating such as painting would she be permitted to do and a few other subtle no go things. My answer was not a direct no but that usually it is cheaper for me to employ my favourite painter than pay for the paint for tenants to do the work. I did ask if they knew someone I knew who had worked in her current position and the talker said she had not heard of her. I offered them an application form and made no non permitted questions. Recently another property manager said they too had a similar experience.

For some of us the world is small. I have subscribed for decades to a landlord newsletter out of the USA. I rarely read the articles but this one below caught my eye.

FAIR HOUSING TESTERS ARE NOT A MYTH

Below is an advertisement to hire part-time testers in 24 Indiana counties. This ad was spotted recently by an Indiana landlord.

NEEDED FAIR HOUSING TESTERS (SECRET SHOPPERS)

"Stated simply, testing is typically sending two individuals with similar profiles and housing needs but with different protected class statuses, such as race, to the same available housing unit to see if they are treated differently because of their protected class status. For example, to determine if people are being discriminated against due to their race by a lender, we may pair a black tester with a white tester and see if they are treated differently.

Testing can occur in the rental, real estate, sales, or lending markets. Without testing, most housing discrimination goes undetected. This position is so critically important to stopping housing discrimination. We are also always in need of more Fair Housing Testers (Secret Shoppers)! Testers are a diverse group of dependable, conscientious people, 18 years and older, who assist those working to eliminate housing discrimination in gathering information about housing practices. They are of various racial and ethnic groups, across genders, and over a broad range of ages with and without disabilities.

Testers take on various roles and profiles. They do not try to trap the housing provider or cause them to discriminate. They perform a task similar to a restaurant critic. They observe and record their experiences. The tester's job is to gather information, much like anyone on a housing search or when seeking a loan, and to observe how a housing provider treats prospective housing tenants, mortgage applicants, or home buyers. After each test, the tester will complete a detailed account of what occurred during the test and submit it to the FHCCI staff.

Testers receive a stipend for their time ranging from \$50-\$200 per test, depending upon the type of test conducted. Related expenses are also reimbursed with prior approval. Due to labor requirements, testers are classified as part-time employees but the time for testing is very flexible based on your schedule and time available. Some FHCCI testers conduct tests several times a month, while others may only test occasionally as their schedule allows and as we have need for their assistance. Want to get an application to be a Fair Housing Tester? Just email us at _____."

WARNING TO LANDLORDS: Treat EVERYONE as if they are a tester. Treat EVERYONE the SAME. That prospect might be earning \$200 to call you or walk into your open house, even without submitting an app.

-- Brad, Indiana Landlord

After sharing the above ad, it led to a discussion with landlords sharing about possible encounters they have had with testers and additional tips on how to handle inquiries so that you will "pass the test" and not be found guilty of illegal discrimination.

Regards
Glenn